

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Report on the Progress of The Kent County Housing Commission in Obtaining Goals set forth in the PHA 5-Year Plan.**

**Submitted October 2013**

#### **Goal 1.**

Kent County Housing Commission applied for and was awarded 25 VASH vouchers in July 2013. The Kent County Housing Commission is vigilant in looking for opportunities for additional section 8 housing choice vouchers.

#### **Goal 2.**

Kent County Housing Commission will outreach to landlords in all areas including those with a low concentration of poverty. Kent County plans to hold an in-service meeting with landlords to educate them on the section 8 program. This will allow section 8 voucher holders more opportunities for housing in areas outside the City of Grand Rapids. This will allow for expanded housing choices and increased accessibility to opportunities. Also, Kent County Housing Commission sends a representative to the Rental Property Owners Association's breakfast meeting at least quarterly. Additionally, many Landlords contact the Kent County Housing Commission on a regular basis to advertise their rental units, thus indicating the positive relationship that Kent County has within the community.

#### **Goal 3.**

The Kent County Housing Commission partners with The Wyoming Housing Commission and The Grand Rapids Housing Commission for the purpose of cost sharing research done on local rent reasonableness and utility allowance. Adjustments to the Kent County rent limit and utility allowance are done on an annual basis to ensure that pricing is both fair for section 8 clients and reasonable within the jurisdiction. The Kent County Housing Commission has been operating its Homeownership Program since early 2007. The Kent County Housing Commission currently has 5 successful home owners through this program and several additional candidates from the FSS program who are working towards purchasing a home.

#### **Goal 4.**

The Kent County Housing Commission implemented the Family Self-Sufficiency Program in 1998. Since that time the Kent County Housing Commission has developed working relationships with over 50 organizations within the community. These relationships build bridges for section 8 clients for things like higher education, child care, credit repair, medical services, career resource information, legal services and home ownership workshops just to name a few. As of July 2013, there were 65 clients enrolled in the FSS program or 15% of our total Section 8 recipients. The Kent County Housing Commission works side by side with the Kent County Community Development

Department, in fact both departments work in the same office. This working relationship allows for several positive benefits for Section 8 clients, especially seniors and those with disabilities. The Kent County Community Development Department funds organizations like Senior Neighbors, Senior Meals and Hope Network North Kent Transit Service. These services directly benefit seniors and persons with disabilities and provide them services like transportation, social networking and community involvement which in turn increase their overall independence. The Kent County Housing Commission is able to offer direct referrals to these services for clients in this group.

**Goal 5.**

Through its Community Development Department, Kent County contracts with the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan (FHCWM) to provide information, training and technical assistance concerning local, state and federal fair housing laws. FHCWM provides local units of government, community-based organizations, housing consumers, property owners and managers information regarding the rental, sale, financing, refinancing and availability of safe, decent and sanitary housing. Additionally, FHCWM facilitated a training seminar for the 33 local units of government within Kent County. FHCWM also provides complaint-based and survey testing to monitor evidence of housing discrimination. Section 8 recipients are informed of these important services when they are issued a voucher and when planning a move.